

TSUTOMU NIHEI

BLAME

ACADEMY

AND SO ON

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BLAME ACADEMY! AND SO ON  
COMMENTARY, BY TOHRU HONDA

01

ZEB-NOID



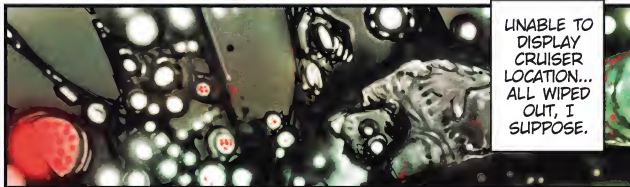
THE WAR AGAINST THE FLIES THAT BEGAN HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF YEARS AGO WITH THE BIRTH OF HUMANITY HAD MIGRATED FROM ITS GENESIS ON EARTH TO A DISTANT PLANET, WHERE IT APPROACHED ITS CONCLUSION...





SYSTEM  
RE-  
CHECK...

FULL  
PHASE  
CHARGE,  
MOBILITY  
SYSTEMS  
UNABLE TO  
BOOT...



UNABLE TO  
DISPLAY  
CRUISER  
LOCATION...  
ALL WIPED  
OUT, I  
SUPPOSE.

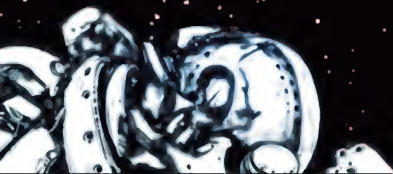
ONE  
NEEDLE-  
FLY AP-  
PROACH-  
ING...

ZZT...

...  
COMING  
TO FINISH  
ME OFF.

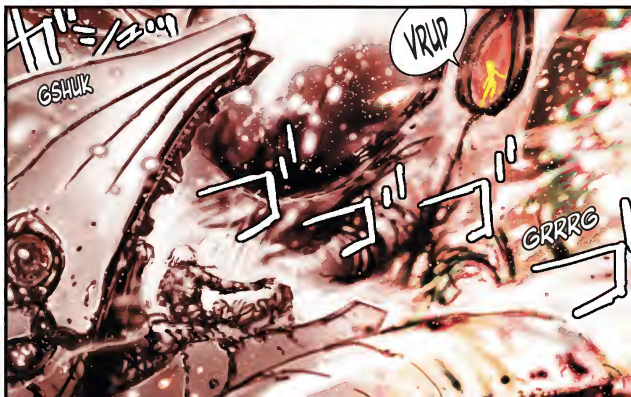


RE-  
CHECK...  
NO RE-  
SPONSE.



キラッ  
GLINT











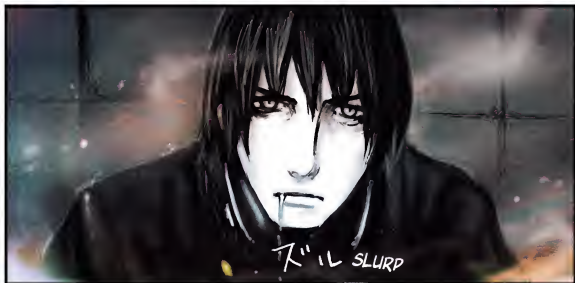
FOR GENERATIONS, THE HUMANS AND FLIES HAD MANIPULATED THEIR GENES TO PRODUCE STRONGER AND STRONGER SOLDIERS. THROUGH THE COINCIDENCE OF MUTATION, THIS PAIR WOUND UP CAPABLE OF MATING. THIS MIRACULOUS ENCOUNTER OF EXTREMELY RARE BEINGS WAS THE FIRST STEP TO THE EVENTUAL UNIFICATION OF THE TWO SPECIES AND THE END OF THEIR LONG, LONG WAR.

01

ZEB-NOID - END

02

BLAME ACADEMY!





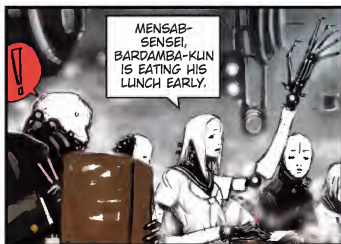


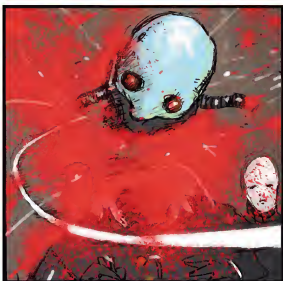




















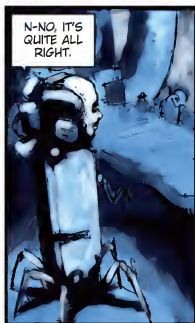




SANA-KAN-  
SENSEI! I HEAR  
YOU OPENED FIRE  
ON A STUDENT  
AGAIN?



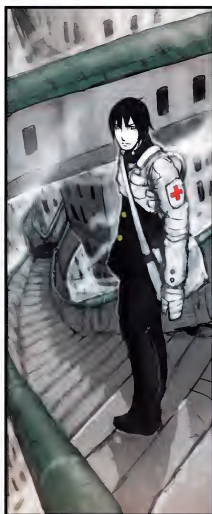
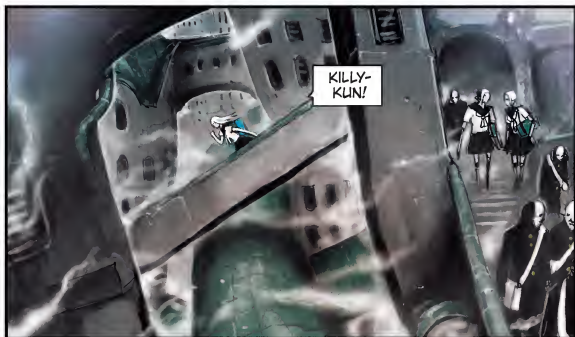
I DO NOT  
APPROVE  
OF THIS!

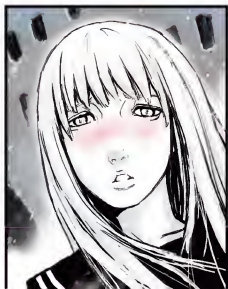
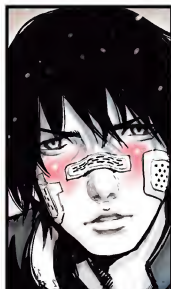
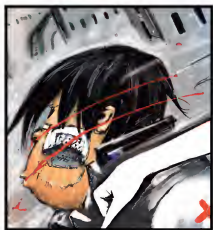


N-NO, IT'S  
QUITE ALL  
RIGHT.



YOU'VE GOT  
A PROB-  
LEM?









02

BLAME ACADEMY! - END

# 03

BLAME ACADEMY!  
FIELD TRIP TO NARA





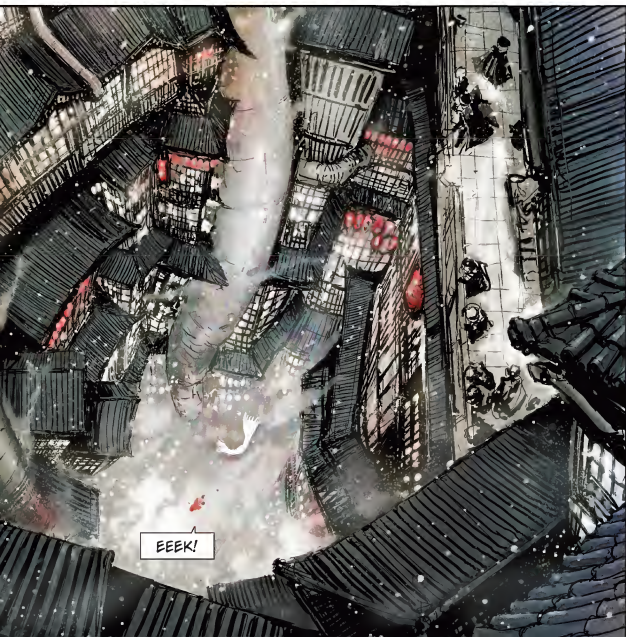


LISTEN TO THIS, KILLY-KUN!  
IT SAYS THAT IN THE AGE  
THIS TEMPLE WAS BUILT,  
PEOPLE REALLY DID JUMP  
OFF THE PLATFORM TO  
THE GROUND BELOW.

THAT'S AMAZING!  
AND HARDLY ANY OF  
THEM DIED.




THE ANCIENTS  
MUST HAVE HAD  
VERY STURDY  
BODIES.











SO YOU'RE SAYING  
ALL THIS STUFF IS A  
PLOT YOU COOKED UP  
TO GET BACK AT HIM  
IS BASED ON A TEN-  
YEAR-OLD GRUDGE?



YOU'RE THE SILICON  
CREATURES FROM  
THE FIRST VOLUME  
OF BLAME!, AREN'T  
YOU?

BUT I THOUGHT  
KILLY SHOT  
YOU...



MY ANGER  
STEMS FROM  
THREE YEARS  
AGO!!

NO! LOOK  
AT THIS!!



LOOK AT YOU  
ALL, CARRYING ON  
LIKE FOOLS AND  
PRETENDING TO BE  
SCHOOL CLASS-  
MATES. AND YET...



I  
DIDN'T EVEN...  
SHOW UP...

WHY  
HASN'T  
EVERYONE  
RAGED  
ETERNALLY  
AGAINST  
MY  
ONLY  
IMAGE  
?



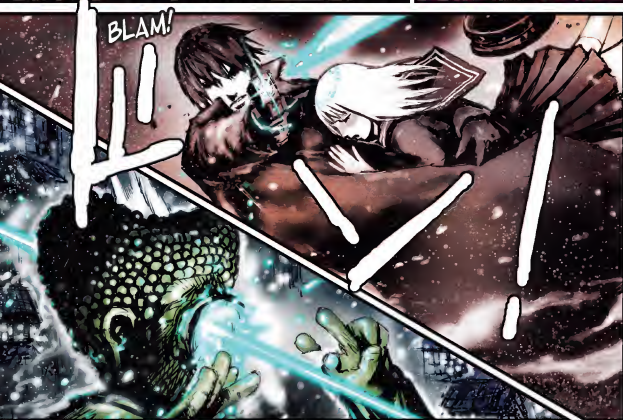




TAKE THIS!!!



DAMN YOU!  
WHAT WAS  
YOUR NAME--  
CIBOT? YOU  
REALLY WANT  
TO HOG THE  
SPOTLIGHT  
SO BAD?! YOU  
AMATEUR!



"VWO HOH  
HOH," INDEED!  
YOUR WEAPON  
DID NOTHING!





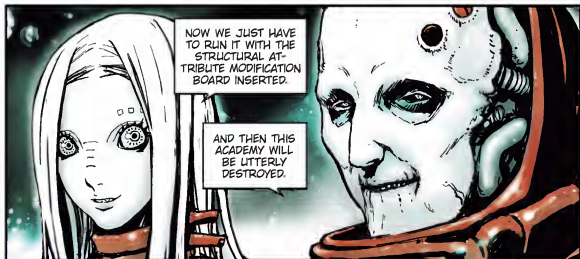
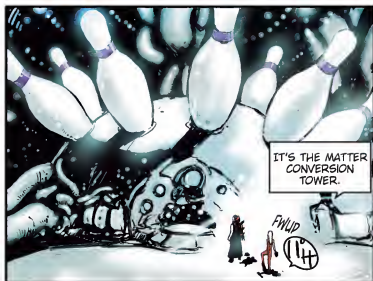


# 03

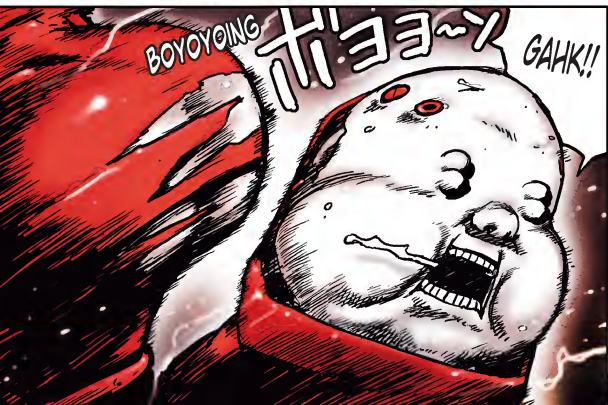
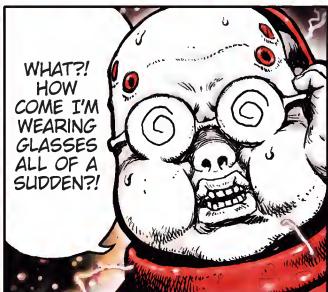
BLAME ACADEMY!  
FIELD TRIP TO NARA - END

# 04

BLAME ACADEMY!  
BENEATH THE  
SAKURA TOWER





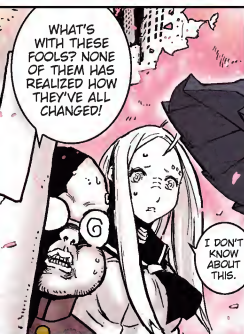


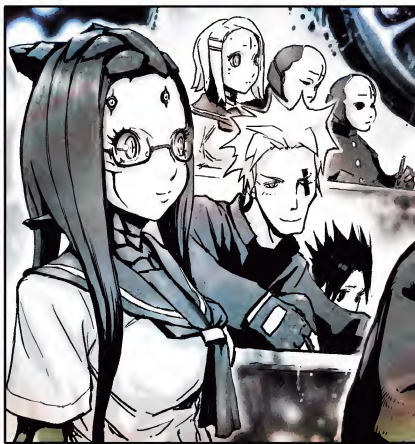
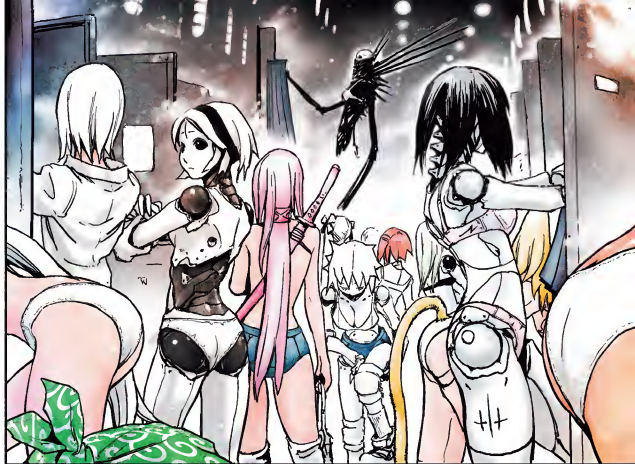


WHAT'S  
WITH  
YOUR  
FACE?  
WHAT'S  
WITH...  
THOSE  
?!

HMM...  
AS A MATTER  
OF FACT, WE  
MIGHT BE ABLE  
TO SLIP INTO  
THE SCHOOL  
LIKE THIS!!









SANA-KAN-SENSEI!  
ICO'S GOT A  
STOMACH ACHE.  
CAN I TAKE  
HIM TO THE  
NURSE?

SHUT  
UP! I CAN  
GO ON MY  
OWN!



LEAVE  
!

GOTTA  
PISS.

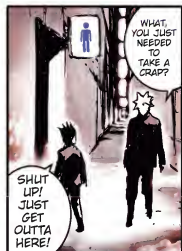


! KRUNCH



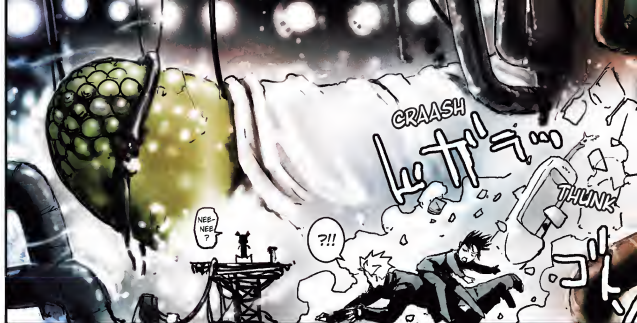
WHAT'S  
YOUR  
PROB-  
LEM?

GET  
OUT, I  
SAID!

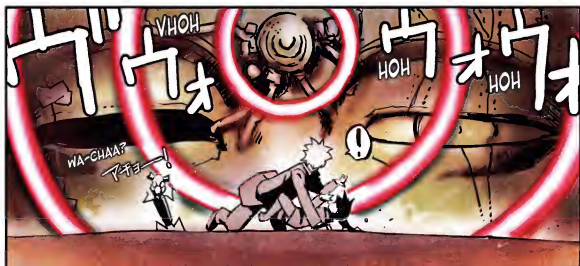
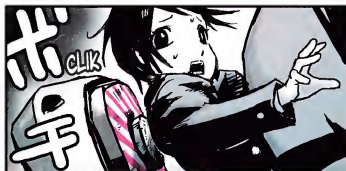
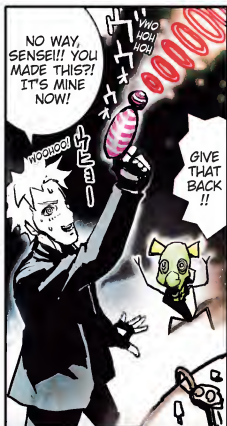
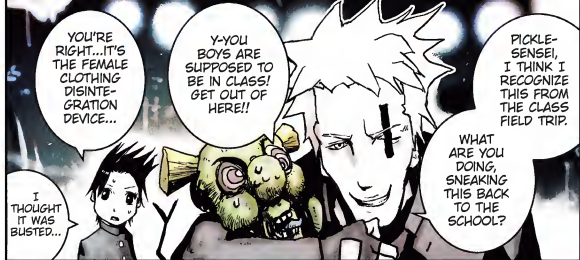


WHAT,  
YOU JUST  
NEEDED  
TO  
TAKE A  
CRAP?

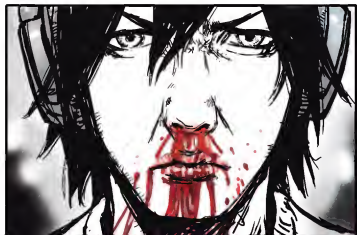
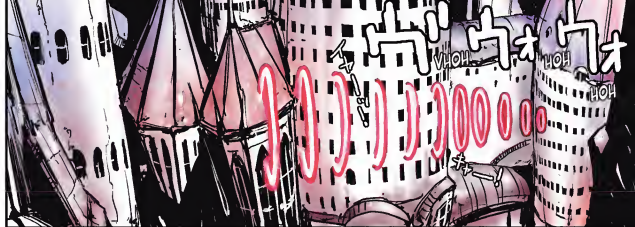
SHUT  
UP!  
JUST  
GET  
OUTTA  
HERE!

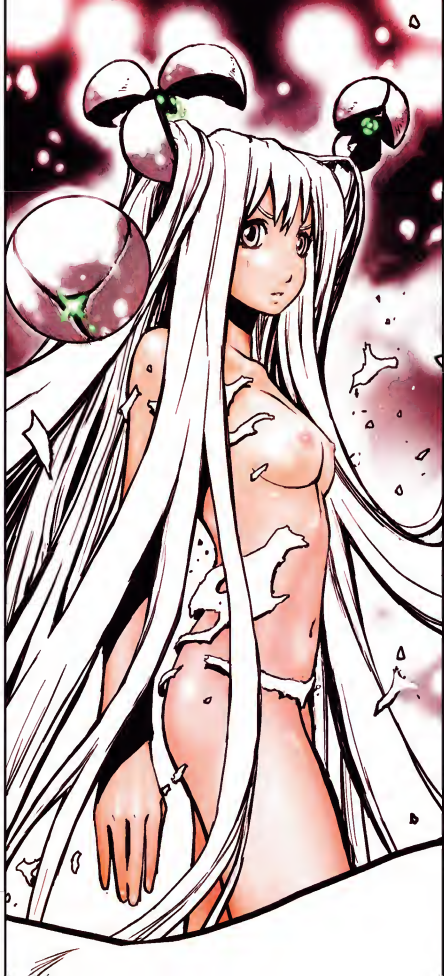
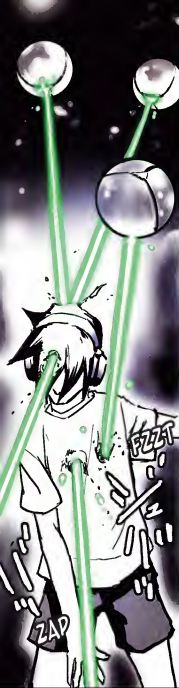


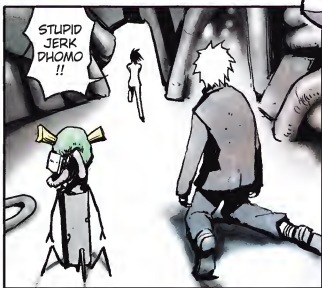


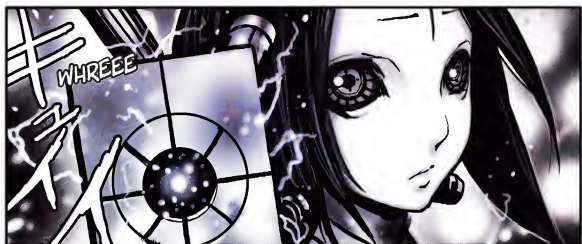
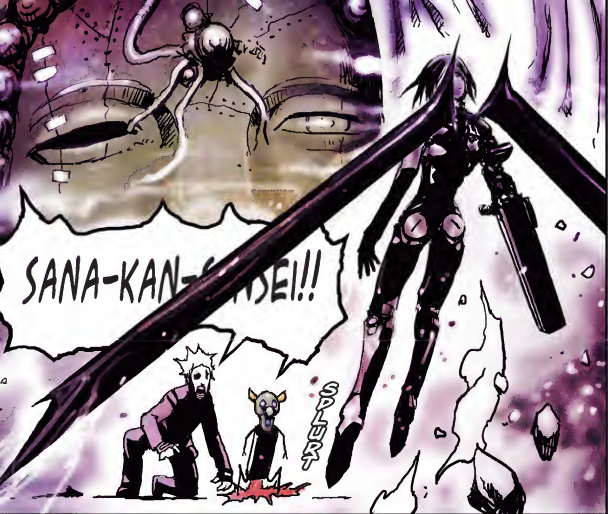




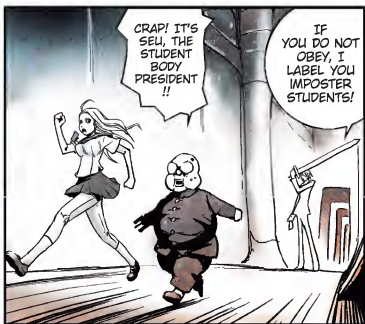
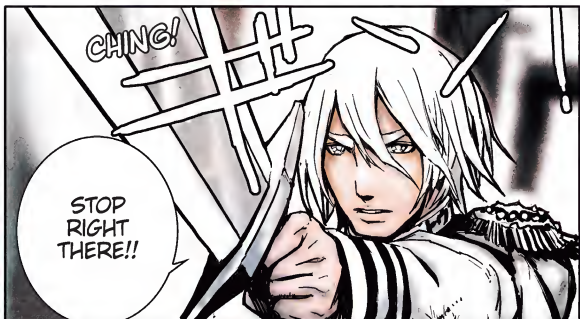




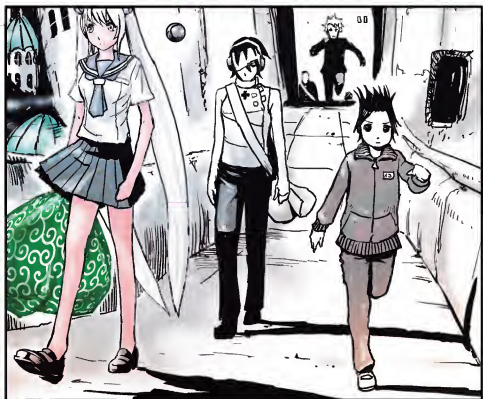












\*SYMBOL: BLAME

05

PACKAGE





A  
PACKAGE  
ARRIVED  
FOR MY  
BROTHER.

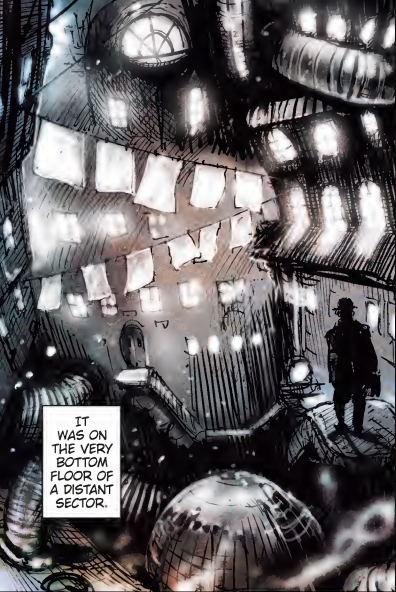


BUT HE LEFT  
THE FAMILY  
FORTY YEARS  
AGO, AND  
WAS NEVER  
HEARD FROM  
SINCE.

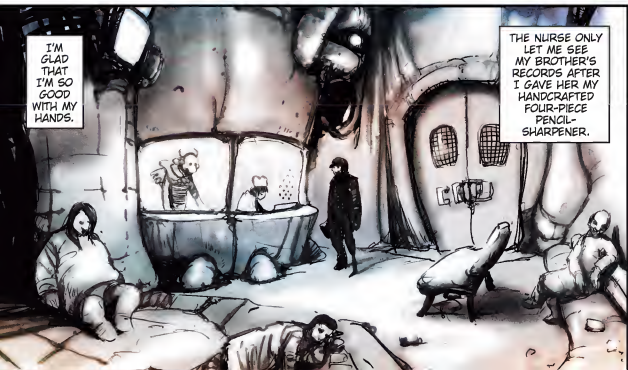


I DECIDED  
TO VISIT  
THE  
HOSPITAL  
OF THE  
SENDER.





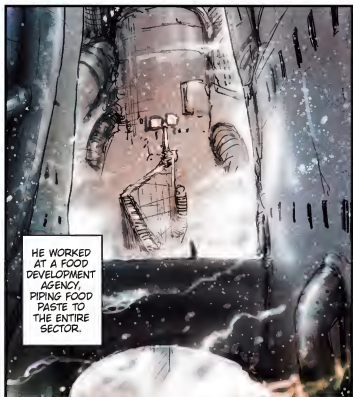
IT  
WAS ON  
THE VERY  
BOTTOM  
FLOOR OF  
A DISTANT  
SECTOR.



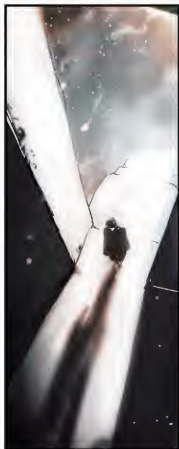
I'M  
GLAD  
THAT  
I'M SO  
GOOD  
WITH MY  
HANDS.

THE NURSE ONLY  
LET ME SEE  
MY BROTHER'S  
RECORDS AFTER  
I GAVE HER MY  
HANDCRAFTED  
FOUR-PIECE  
PENCIL-  
SHARPENER.





HE WORKED  
AT A FOOD  
DEVELOPMENT  
AGENCY,  
PIPING FOOD  
PASTE TO  
THE ENTIRE  
SECTOR.



WHAT A  
SPLENDID  
SYSTEM!!

\*FOOD





THERE  
WAS MY  
BROTHER.

05

PACKAGE - END

06

NETSPHERE ENGINEER





THE CITY IS MADE OF AN ACCUMULATION  
OF COUNTLESS FLOORS SEPARATED BY THE  
MEGASTRUCTURE. A MILLENNIUM AGO, THE  
UNSEEN MASTER LEFT THE CITY, AND ITS  
GUARDIANS NO LONGER SHOWED  
THEMSELVES. THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE CITY  
CARVED INTO THE MEGASTRUCTURE  
DISAPPEARED AS WELL.





AFTER THE  
FOURTEENTH  
VICTIM SHOWED UP,  
KIJIMA-SAN, WHO  
WAS BORN WITH  
THE GIFT OF FAR-  
SIGHT, SPOTTED AN  
EXTERMINATOR  
AROUND THE LOW-  
EST LEVEL OF THE  
FUNGAL ARRAYS.

THEIR  
UNMOVING  
REMAINS WERE  
SPOTTED  
EVERY NOW  
AND THEN, BUT  
HE SAID THIS  
ONE LOOKED  
FRESHLY-MADE.



WHEN  
HIJIKAZE-SAN  
THE PREFECT  
WAS YOUNG, HE  
LIVED IN THE  
ROYAL CITY. HE  
WAS THE ONLY  
ONE IN THE  
COLONY WITH A  
COMMUNICATIONS  
IMPLANT.

AT THE  
TIME, THE  
PREFECT WAS  
RECEIVING  
LIFE-  
EXTENSION  
TREATMENT,  
WHICH MEANT  
HE KEPT  
GROWING.





ACCORDING TO  
LAW, SUCH AN  
OBJECT MUST  
BE HANDED  
OVER TO  
CENTRAL IF  
DISCOVERED.



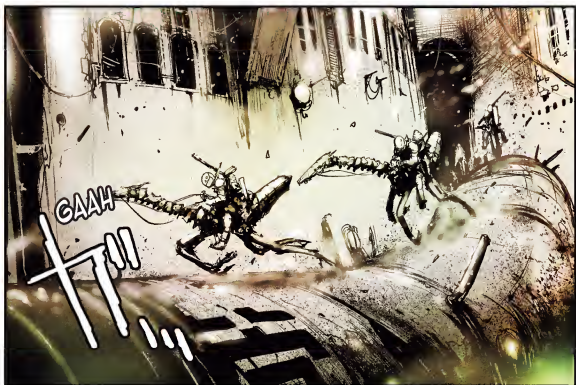
SO ON  
THAT DAY,  
HE SENT A  
MESSAGE TO  
THE CENTRAL  
GOVERNMENT.



IT IS CLEAR  
THAT THIS IS  
BEYOND OUR  
CAPABILITY.



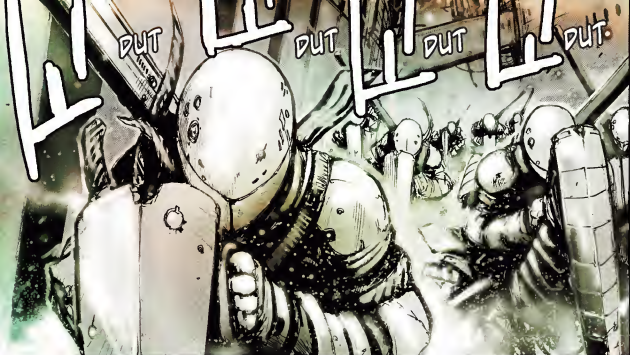
PUT  
PUT  
PUT

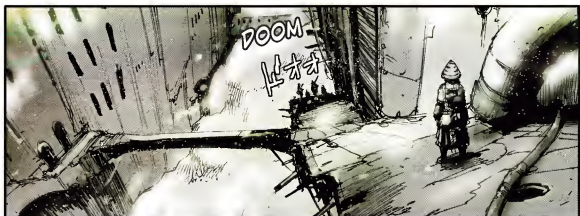
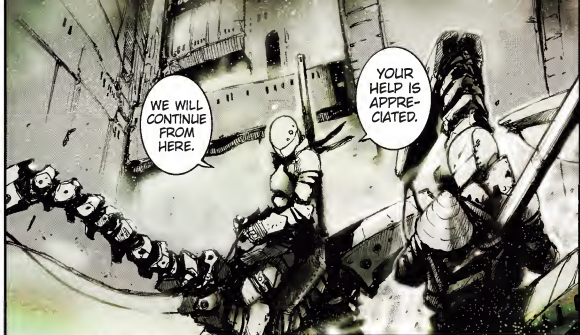


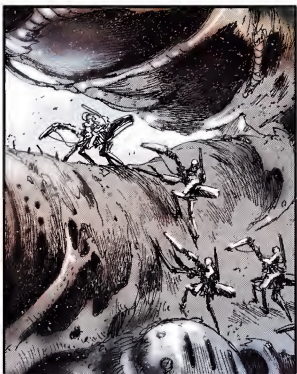
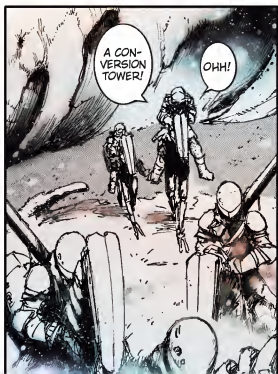
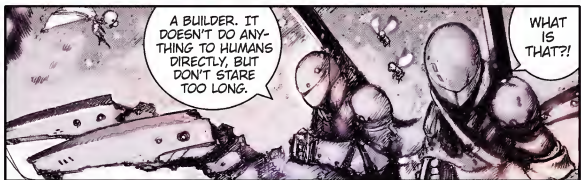
GAH

TH







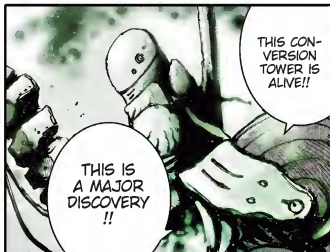






ダダダダ

VUUVUUM

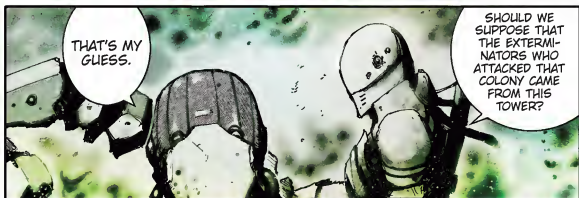


THIS IS  
A MAJOR  
DISCOVERY  
!!

THIS CON-  
VERSION  
TOWER IS  
ALIVE!!



IT'S  
CHARG-  
ING...



THAT'S MY  
GUESS.

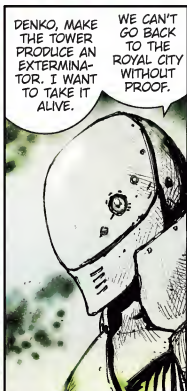
SHOULD WE  
SUPPOSE THAT  
THE EXTERMI-  
NATORS WHO  
ATTACKED THAT  
COLONY CAME  
FROM THIS  
TOWER?



IT'S ALL RIGHT,  
SIR DENKO! WE  
SHALL STRIKE DOWN  
WHATEVER INFERNAL  
TERROR HADES  
SENDS OUR  
WAY!



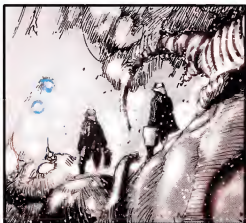
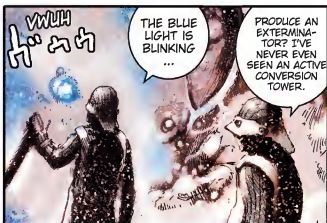
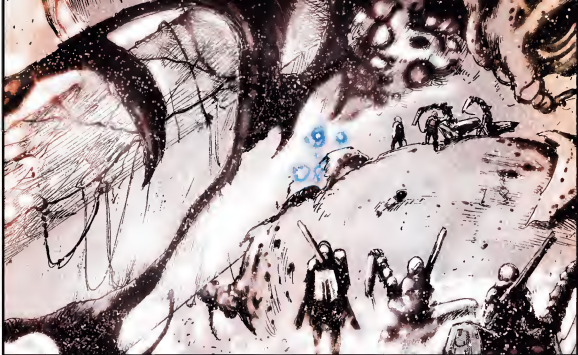
WHAT?!

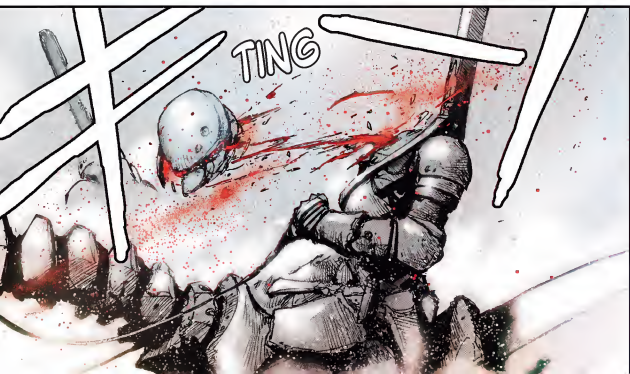
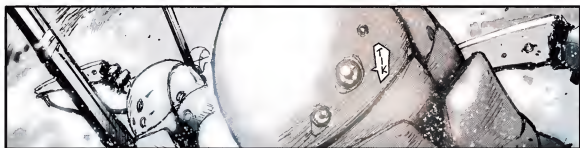


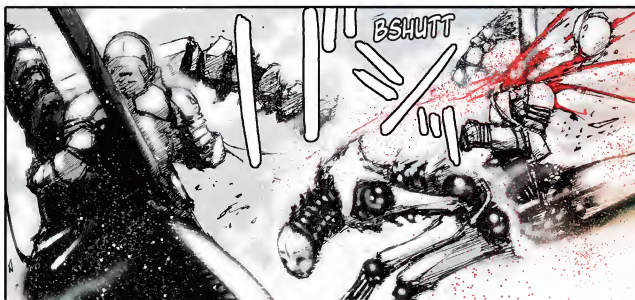
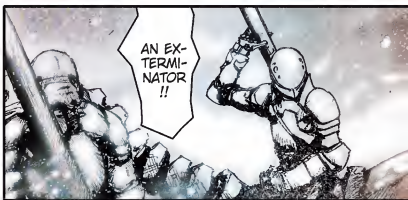
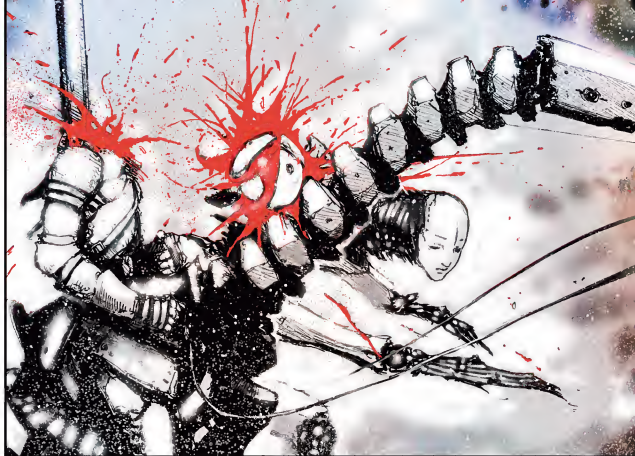
DENKO, MAKE  
THE TOWER  
PRODUCE AN EXTERMI-  
NATOR. I WANT  
TO TAKE IT  
ALIVE.

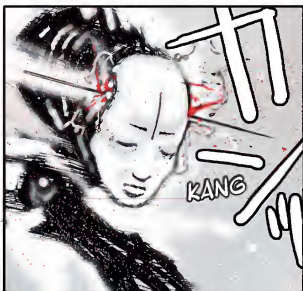
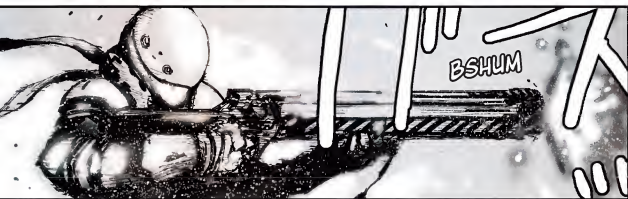
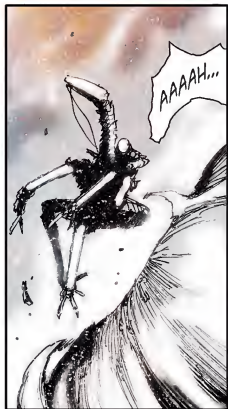
WE CAN'T  
GO BACK TO  
THE ROYAL CITY  
WITHOUT  
PROOF.



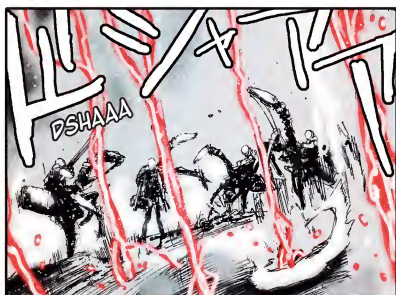
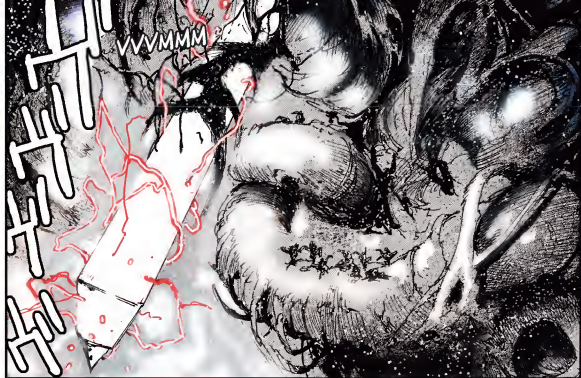






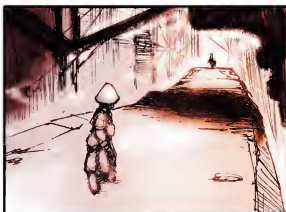
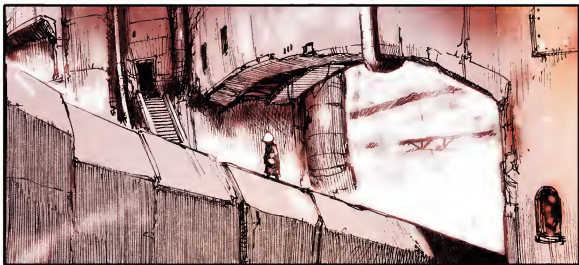


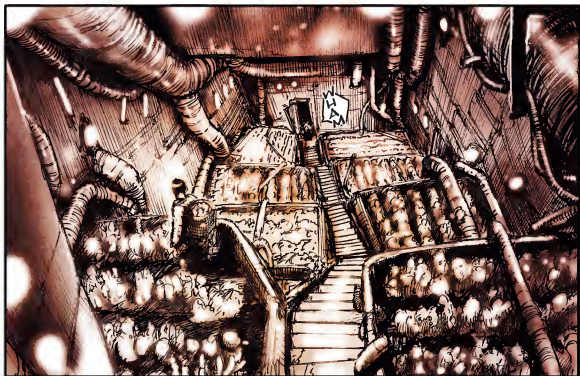


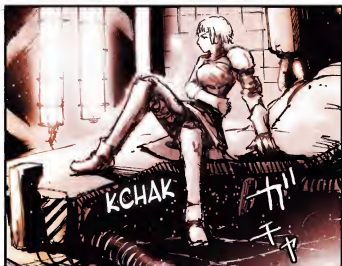
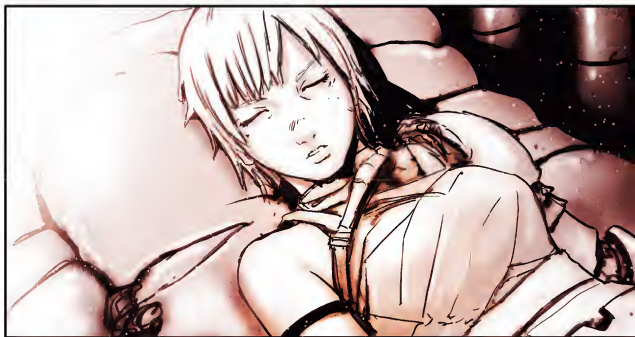
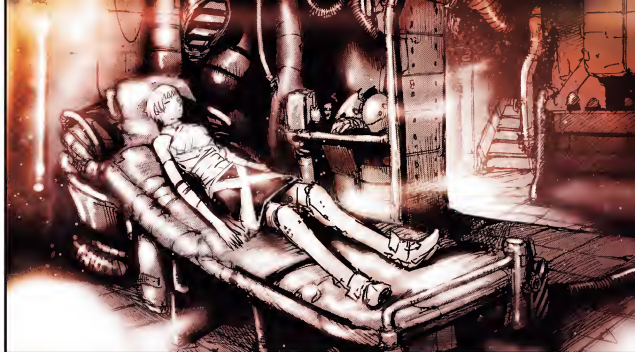




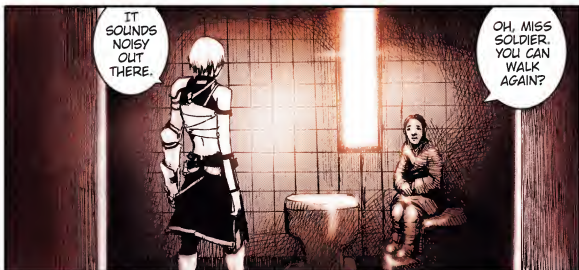
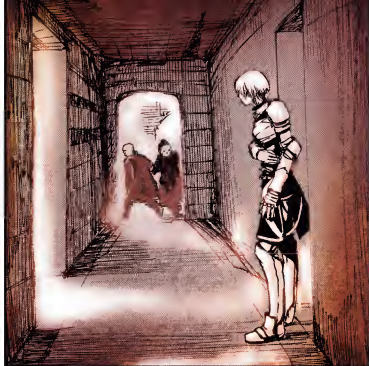






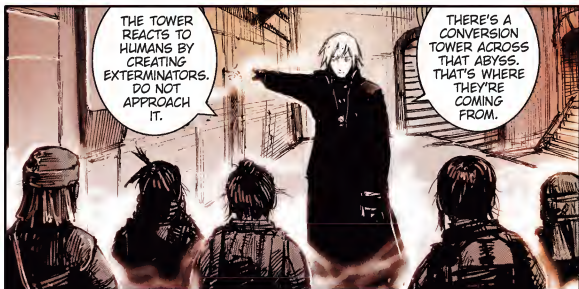
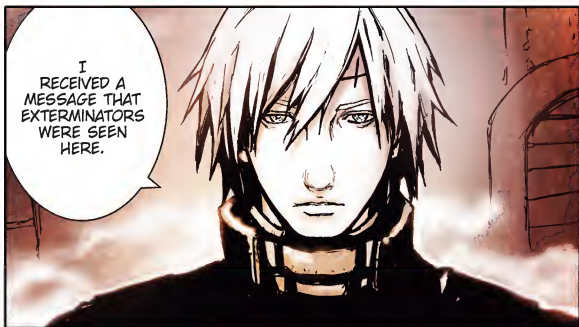


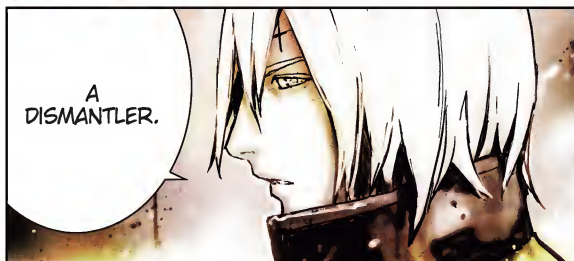
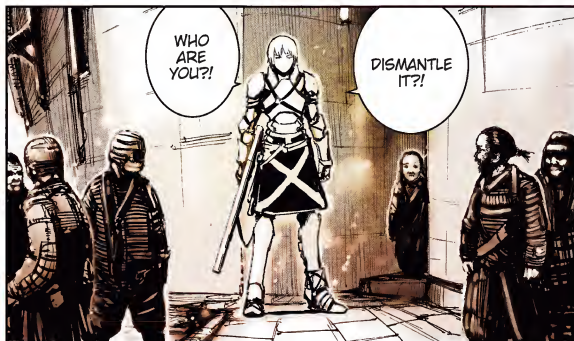
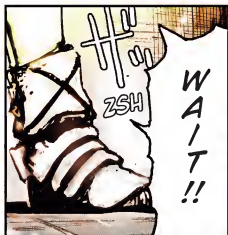


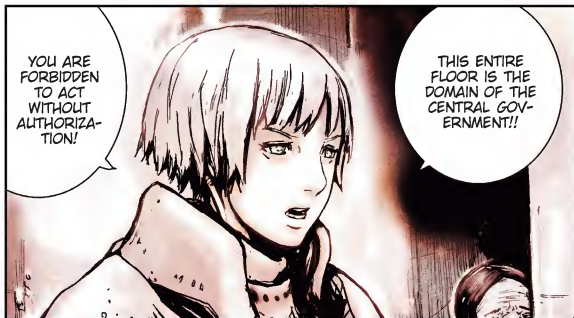






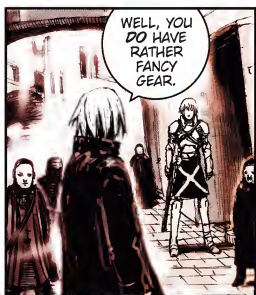




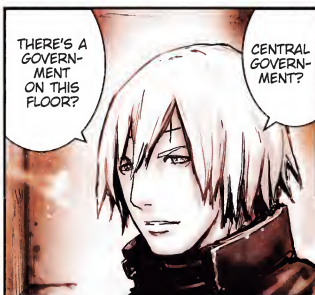


YOU ARE  
FORBIDDEN  
TO ACT  
WITHOUT  
AUTHORIZA-  
TION!

THIS ENTIRE  
FLOOR IS THE  
DOMAIN OF THE  
CENTRAL GOVERN-  
MENT!!



WELL, YOU  
DO HAVE  
RATHER  
FANCY  
GEAR.



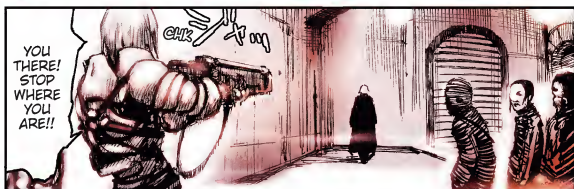
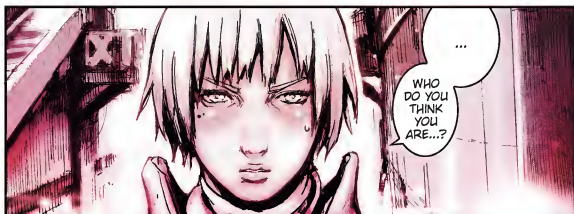
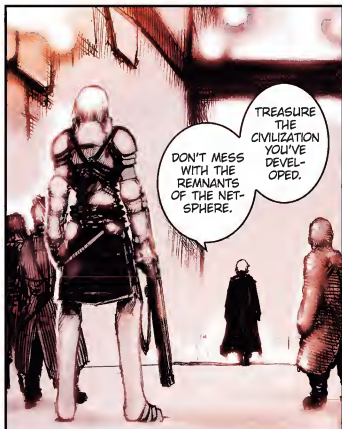
THERE'S A  
GOVERN-  
MENT  
ON THIS  
FLOOR?

CENTRAL  
GOVERN-  
MENT?

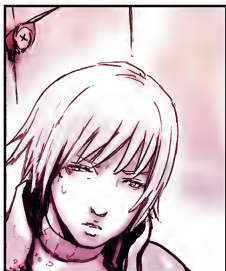
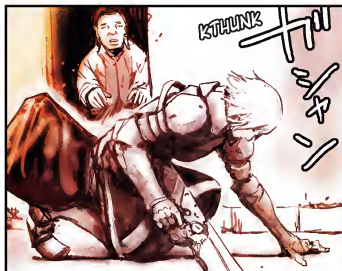


I'VE SEEN  
COUNTLESS  
FLOORS THAT  
GOT WIPED OUT  
FOR TAMPERING  
WITH THE RELICS  
OF THE CITY.

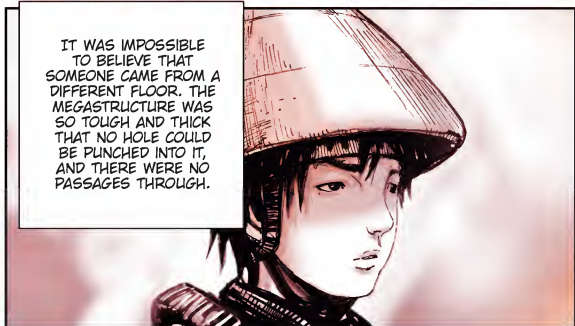
IF YOU'RE  
PLOTING TO  
USE THAT  
TOWER,  
THINK AGAIN.





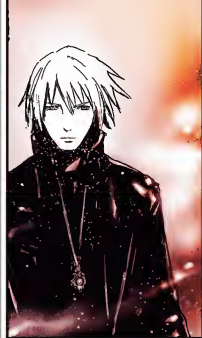


IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE  
TO BELIEVE THAT  
SOMEONE CAME FROM A  
DIFFERENT FLOOR. THE  
MEGASTRUCTURE WAS  
SO TOUGH AND THICK  
THAT NO HOLE COULD  
BE PUNCHED INTO IT,  
AND THERE WERE NO  
PASSAGES THROUGH.





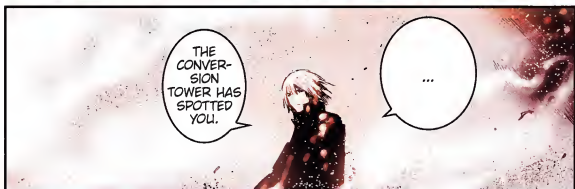
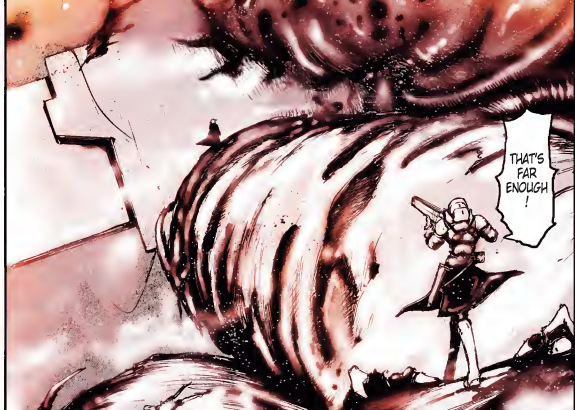


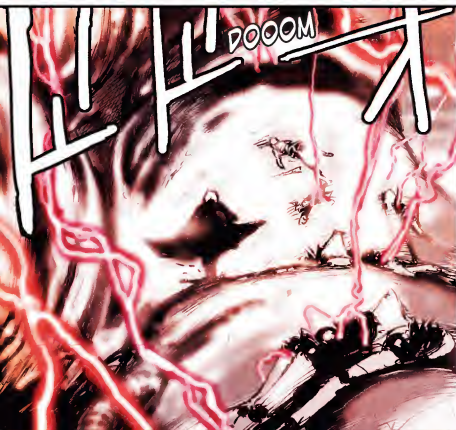
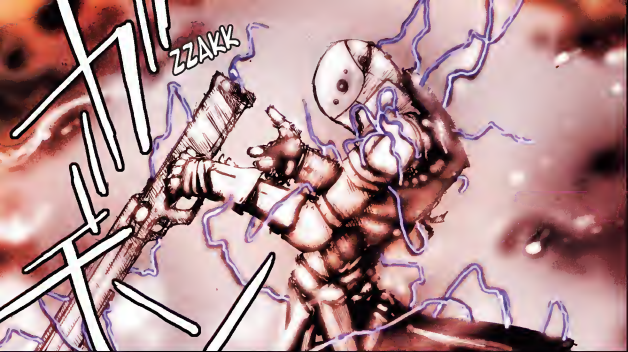


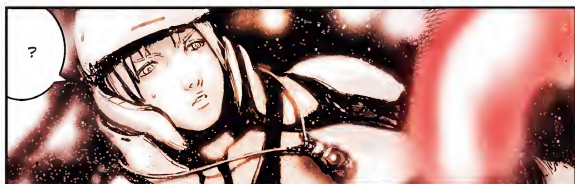


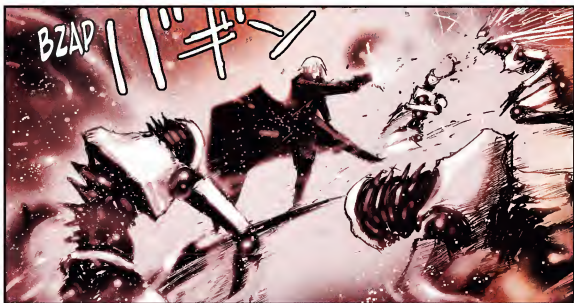
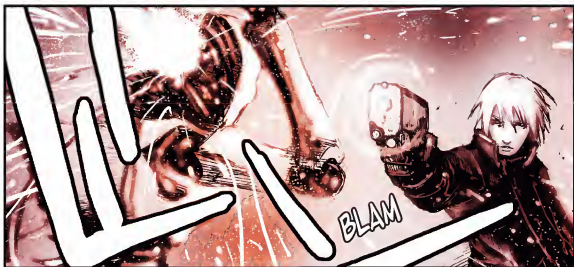
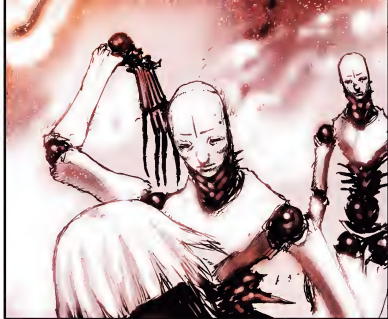




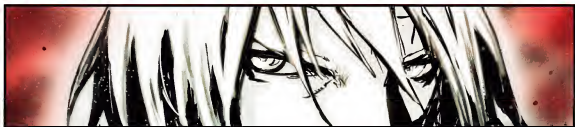


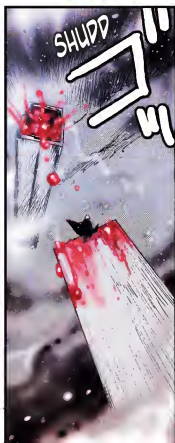
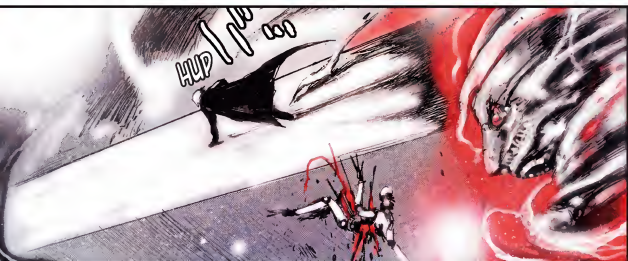


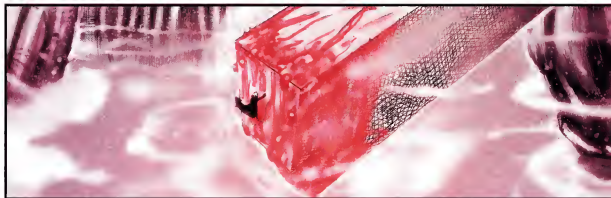




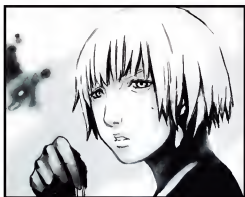






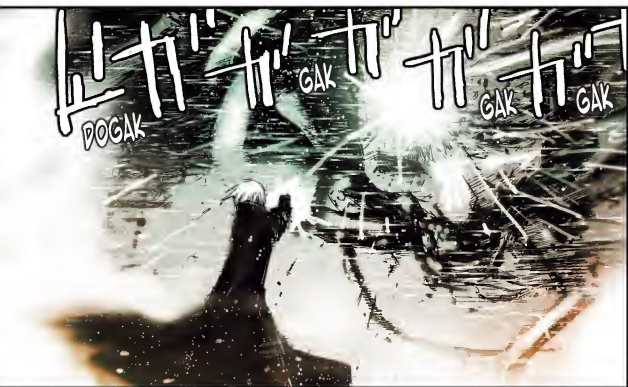


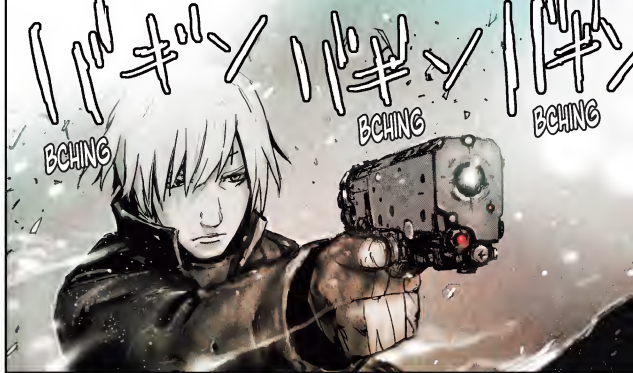






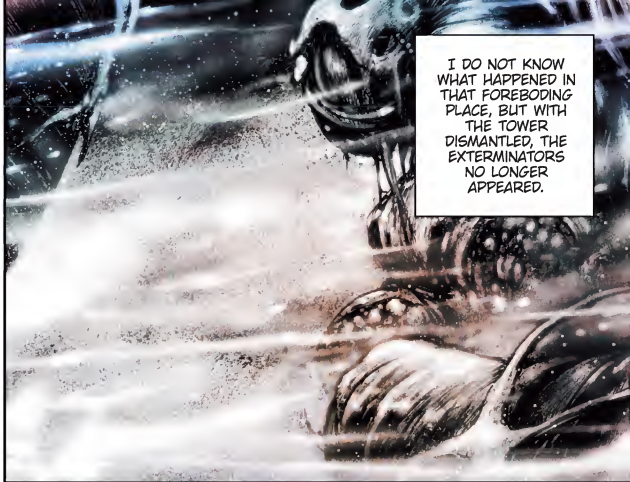




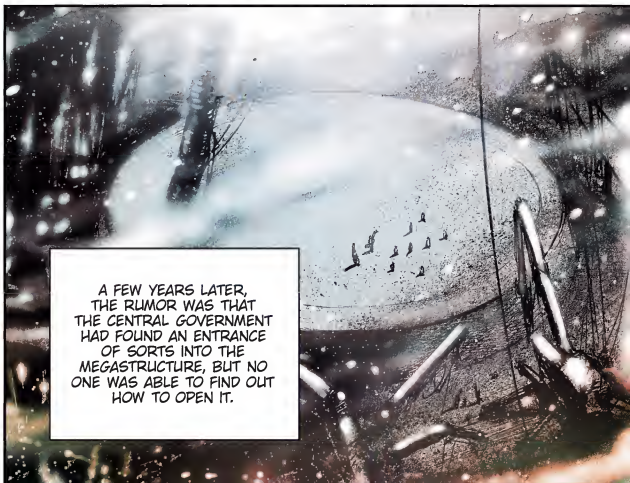








I DO NOT KNOW  
WHAT HAPPENED IN  
THAT FOREBODING  
PLACE, BUT WITH  
THE TOWER  
DISMANTLED, THE  
EXTERMINATORS  
NO LONGER  
APPEARED.



A FEW YEARS LATER,  
THE RUMOR WAS THAT  
THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT  
HAD FOUND AN ENTRANCE  
OF SORTS INTO THE  
MEGASTRUCTURE, BUT NO  
ONE WAS ABLE TO FIND OUT  
HOW TO OPEN IT.

06

NETSPHERE ENGINEER - END

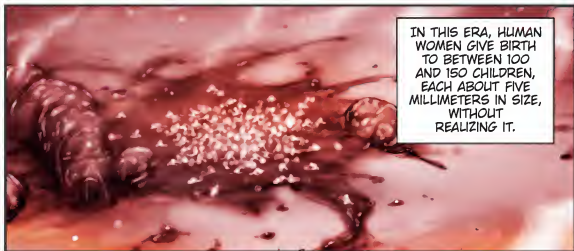
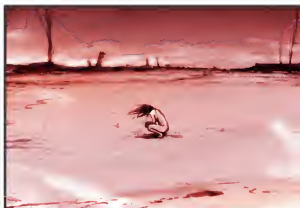
07

PUMP

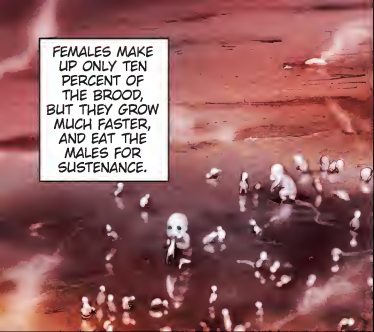




THE UNCEASING RED SKY IS CAUSED BY A  
TRANSPARENT FILM IN THE ATMOSPHERE. THE  
FILM IS MADE FROM FLOATING TREES WITH  
RED SAP. THIS WORLD'S ECOSYSTEM IS  
MAINTAINED BY JUST 37 SPECIES OF PLANT,  
WITH THE ONLY SURVIVING ANIMALS BEING  
FOUR TYPES OF INSECT, AND HUMANITY--THE  
LAST MAMMAL ON THE PLANET, ON THE  
VERGE OF EXTINCTION.



IN THIS ERA, HUMAN  
WOMEN GIVE BIRTH  
TO BETWEEN 100  
AND 150 CHILDREN,  
EACH ABOUT FIVE  
MILLIMETERS IN SIZE,  
WITHOUT  
REALIZING IT.



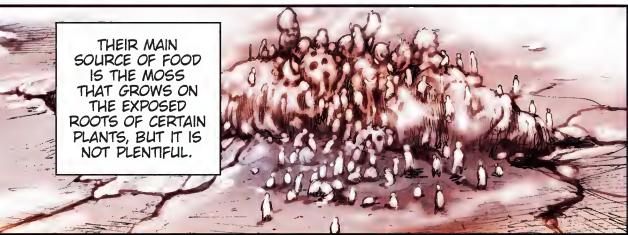
FEMALES MAKE UP ONLY TEN PERCENT OF THE BROOD, BUT THEY GROW MUCH FASTER, AND EAT THE MALES FOR SUSTENANCE.



AFTER BIRTH, THE BABIES EAT THE MOTHER'S WASTE TO GROW.



BY THIS STAGE, THE MALES SEPARATE INTO TWO OR THREE GROUPS THAT ACT SEPARATELY FROM THE FEMALES.



THEIR MAIN SOURCE OF FOOD IS THE MOSS THAT GROWS ON THE EXPOSED ROOTS OF CERTAIN PLANTS, BUT IT IS NOT PLENTIFUL.

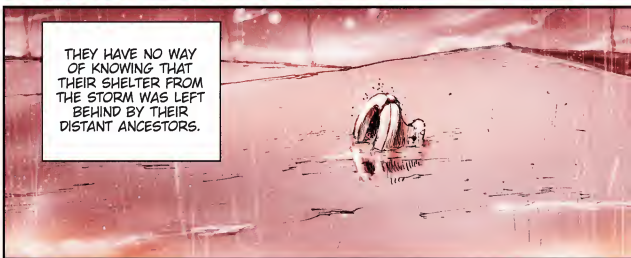


MANY GROUPS DIE OUT WITHOUT EVER FINDING A SOURCE OF FOOD.



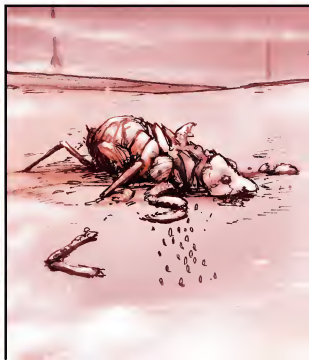
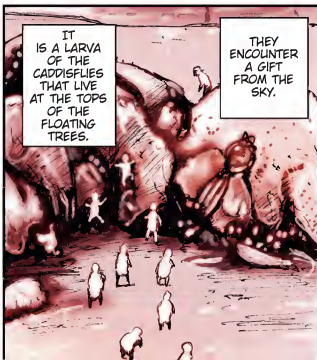
OVER THE TWO MONTHS IT HAS SURVIVED, THIS GROUP HAS LOST OVER HALF ITS NUMBER TO STARVATION, DISEASE, AND ACCIDENTS.

THEY HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING THAT THEIR SHELTER FROM THE STORM WAS LEFT BEHIND BY THEIR DISTANT ANCESTORS.



IT IS A LARVA OF THE CADDISFLIES THAT LIVE AT THE TOPS OF THE FLOATING TREES.

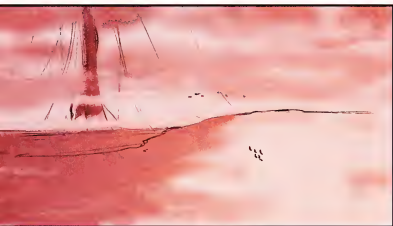
THEY ENCOUNTER A GIFT FROM THE SKY.



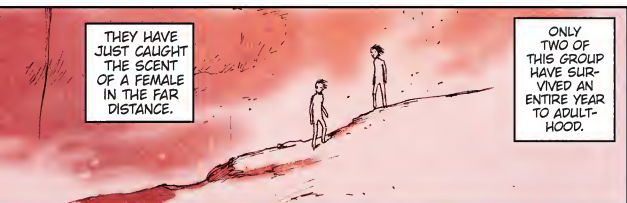
BUT THEY  
ARE NOT  
THE ONLY  
ONES TO  
DETECT THE  
SUDDEN  
PRESENCE  
OF FOOD.



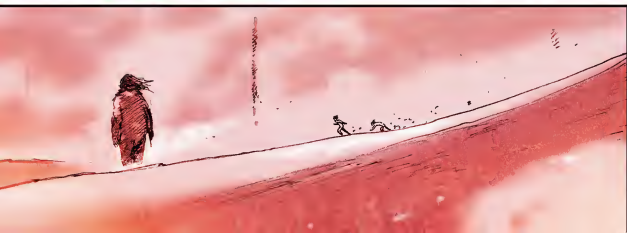
IT IS A  
MIRACLE  
THAT ANY  
OF THEM  
SURVIVED  
THE ATTACK  
OF THE TIN-  
ROACHES.



THEY HAVE  
JUST CAUGHT  
THE SCENT  
OF A FEMALE  
IN THE FAR  
DISTANCE.



ONLY  
TWO OF  
THIS GROUP  
HAVE SUR-  
VIVED AN  
ENTIRE YEAR  
TO ADULT-  
HOOD.



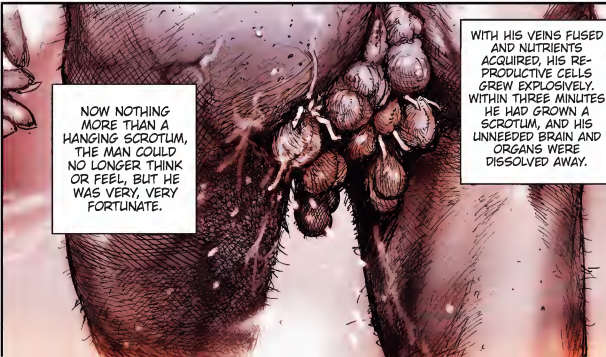




ONE FELL  
WHILE  
CLIMBING  
HER LEG,  
AND WAS  
CRUSHED.

BUT  
THE OTHER  
SUCCEEDED  
IN HANGING  
ON, AND  
SUCCESS-  
FULLY  
FUSED  
WITH THE  
FEMALE.

OTHER  
MALES HAD  
DONE SO  
ALREADY,  
BUT THAT  
COULDN'T  
BE HELPED.



NOW NOTHING  
MORE THAN A  
HANGING SCROTUM,  
THE MAN COULD  
NO LONGER THINK  
OR FEEL, BUT HE  
WAS VERY, VERY  
FORTUNATE.

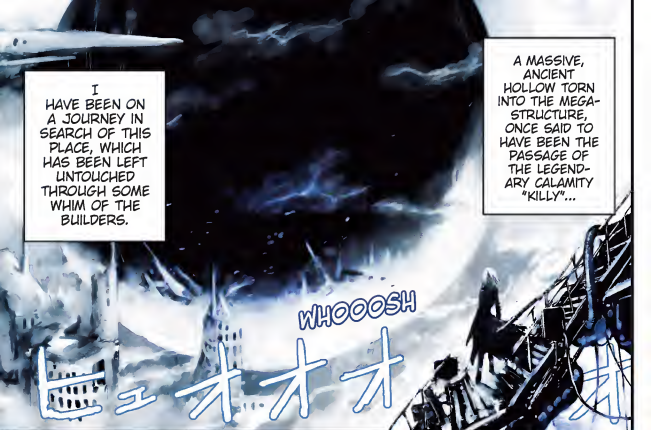
WITH HIS VEINS FUSED  
AND NUTRIENTS  
ACQUIRED, HIS RE-  
PRODUCTIVE CELLS  
GREW EXPLOSIVELY.  
WITHIN THREE MINUTES  
HE HAD GROWN A  
SCROTUM, AND HIS  
UNNEEDED BRAIN AND  
ORGANS WERE  
DISSOLVED AWAY.

07

PUMP - END

# 08

BLAME!  
EIGHTH-GENERATION  
PCELL'S MEGASTRUCTURE  
ESCAPE CHRONICLE



I  
HAVE BEEN ON  
A JOURNEY IN  
SEARCH OF THIS  
PLACE, WHICH  
HAS BEEN LEFT  
UNTOUCHED  
THROUGH SOME  
WHIM OF THE  
BUILDERS.

A MASSIVE,  
ANCIENT  
HOLLOW TORN  
INTO THE MEGA-  
STRUCTURE,  
ONCE SAID TO  
HAVE BEEN THE  
PASSAGE OF  
THE LEGEND-  
ARY CALAMITY  
"KILLY"...

WHOOOSH

ヒュオオオオ

...THAT WOULD  
MEAN THE CITY  
ITSELF IS NOT  
AN ENDLESSLY  
REPEATING  
STRUCTURE,  
BUT, IN FACT,  
HAS AN  
"END"...

AND IF  
THIS  
KILLY  
TRULY  
EXISTED...

AT SOME  
POINT I HAD  
WANDERED  
INTO A  
HUMAN  
SETTLEMENT  
WITHOUT  
REALIZING  
IT.

I WAS  
CARE-  
LESS. IT  
HAD BEEN  
AGES  
SINCE I  
LAST SAW  
A HUMAN.

OH,  
DAMN.  
THIS  
LOOKS  
LIKE...





MY BILLION-  
SECOND-LONG  
JUVENESCENT  
PERIOD BACK  
HOME FELT  
LIKE MERELY  
THE BLINK  
OF AN EYE  
IN COMPARI-  
SON...

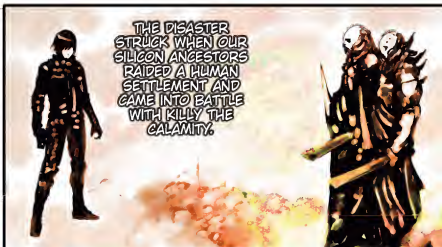


IT WAS  
A VERY  
LONG  
JOURNEY  
...



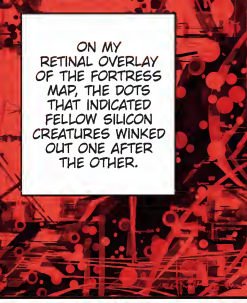


AT THE  
TIME, ALL  
THE TRIAD-  
JUVENILES  
WERE DEVO-  
TEES TO THE  
TEACHINGS  
OF IMPEDIARY  
ANTIMONISM IN  
BARO-CHAPEL.

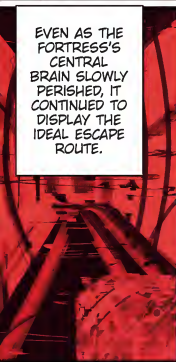


THE HUMANS  
SENT A LARGE  
BUILDER AFTER  
US. ITS BRAIN  
HAD BEEN  
IMPROPERLY  
ALTERED.

KADOOMM



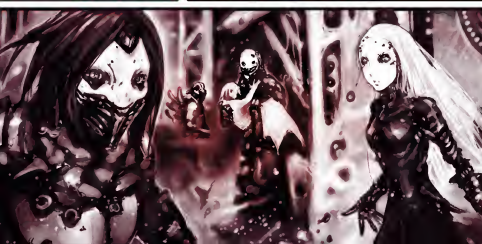
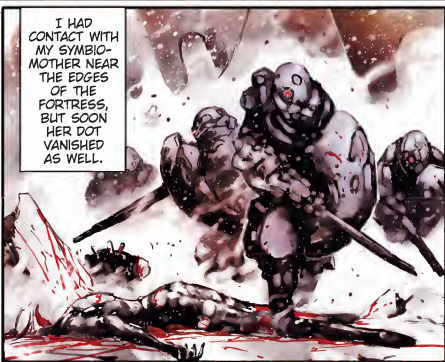
ON MY  
RETINAL OVERLAY  
OF THE FORTRESS  
MAP, THE DOTS  
THAT INDICATED  
FELLOW SILICON  
CREATURES WINKED  
OUT ONE AFTER  
THE OTHER.



EVEN AS THE  
FORTRESS'S  
CENTRAL  
BRAIN SLOWLY  
PERISHED, IT  
CONTINUED TO  
DISPLAY THE  
IDEAL ESCAPE  
ROUTE.



I HAD  
CONTACT WITH  
MY SYMBIO-  
MOTHER NEAR  
THE EDGES  
OF THE  
FORTRESS,  
BUT SOON  
HER DOT  
VANISHED  
AS WELL.




EVENTUALLY  
THE NUMBER  
OF DOTS  
DWINDED TO A  
HANDFUL, AND  
THE MESSAGES  
FROM THE  
FORTRESS  
ENDED...





ONLY EIGHT  
OF US MADE  
IT SAFELY  
THROUGH  
THE  
HUMANS'  
BLOCKADE...



WE  
ENCOUNTERED  
HUMANS  
ON MANY  
OCCASIONS  
DURING OUR  
LONG ESCAPE,  
AND ALL THE  
OTHER DOTS  
VANISHED.



RESTORING  
CONSCIOUS-  
NESS...



FORTY-  
SEVEN  
YEARS  
HAVE  
PASSED  
SINCE I  
FELL...

MY BODY  
WAS IN AN  
AUTOMATED  
SHUTDOWN  
STATE TO  
REDUCE  
FUEL  
USAGE.



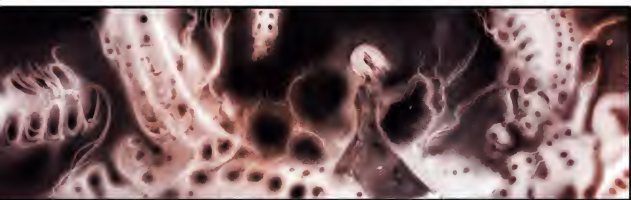
WARNING:  
AWAKENING  
IMMINENT.  
SOMETHING IS  
APPROACHING.

PROBABLY  
INTENDS  
TO SCRAP  
ME...

IT'S A  
SMALL  
BUILDER.











BUT  
THERE'S A  
CONVER-  
SION  
TOWER...  
RIGHT IN  
FRONT OF  
THE EXIT...

IT'S A  
DEVICE THAT  
SUMMONS  
THE CITY'S  
GUARDIANS,  
BACK FROM  
THE AGE  
WHEN THE  
NETSPHERE  
EXISTED.

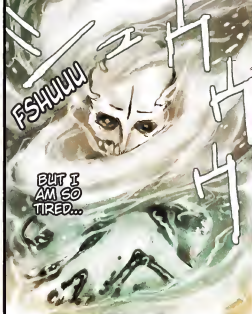
SO IT'S  
STILL  
INTACT...

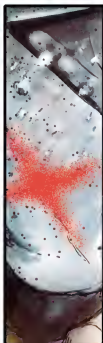


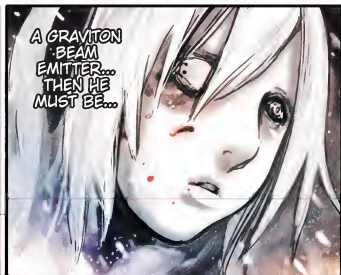
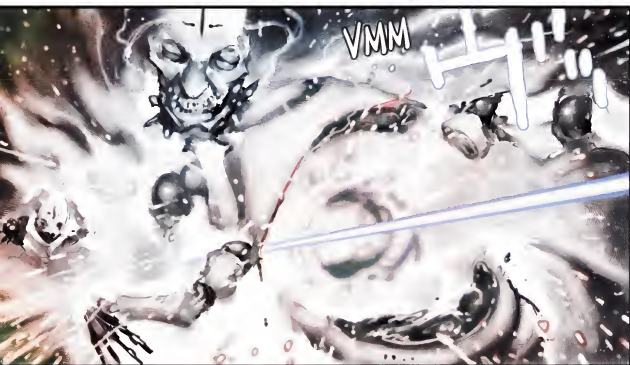
QUOTH THE  
BOOK OF  
THE RUINED  
FLOORS: DO  
NOT INTER-  
FERE WITH  
THE RELICS  
OF THE NET-  
SPHERE...



THE  
FINAL  
MEGA-  
STRUC-  
TURE. AT  
LAST, I  
AM HERE.



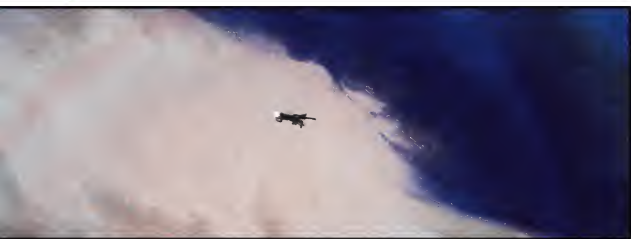












KILLY, THE  
CALAMITY  
SAVED MY  
LIFE...

THE NEXT  
THING I  
KNEW, I WAS  
OUTSIDE THE  
CITY.



OH,  
GOOD...  
IT'S STILL  
INTACT.

STORED  
IN HERE  
IS THE  
MEMORY  
OF THE  
ENTIRE  
74TH  
BRANCH  
CLAN.



IN THE  
HOPE OF  
REBUILDING  
MY HOME...



AND SO I  
ESCAPED  
THE CITY.

# 08

BLAME!  
EIGHTH-GENERATION  
PCELL'S MEGASTRUCTURE  
ESCAPE CHRONICLE - END

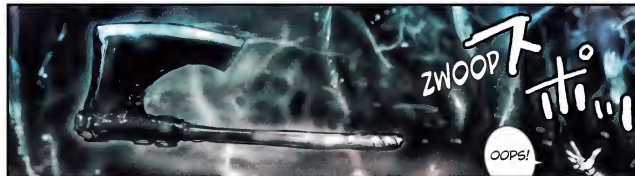
09

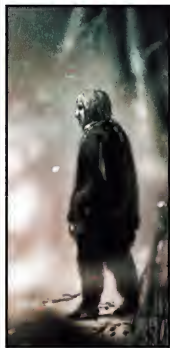
GOD OF THE SWAMP





CHOKK  
CHOKK















09

GOD OF THE SWAMP - END

BLAME ACADEMY! AND SO ON  
TSUTOMU NIHEI ANTHOLOGY / COMMENTARY

*A FLOWER OF MOË BLOOMING IN THE SORROW OF  
KOWLOON BY TORU HONDA*

I GOT A NOTICE FROM THE EDITOR I-UE ASKING FOR A PIECE OF COMMENTARY FOR A VOLUME OF *BLAME!*. BUT I DON'T HAVE THE KIND OF SCIENTIFIC MIND NEEDED TO TALK ABOUT HARD SF, AND I'VE BEEN ON THE RUIN FROM MY HAYAKAWA EDITOR, SO I APOLOGIZED, SAYING THAT I COULDN'T DO IT.

BUT THEN I-UE SAID, "ACTUALLY, I WANT YOU TO COMMENT ON *BLAME ACADEMY!* INSTEAD!"

I SEE.

*BLAME ACADEMY!* IS A WORK FEATURING THE CHARACTERS OF THE ULTRA-HARD DYSTOPIAN SF SERIES *BLAME!*, IN WHICH THE UNCONTROLLED EXPANSION OF TECHNOLOGY THRUSTS HUMANITY INTO A GIANT DEAD WORLD, PLACED INTO THE SETTING OF A SCHOOL MANGA, FOR SOME REASON. IT'S A SERIES OF STORIES THAT MAKE ALL OF ITS READERS WONDER IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO POOR NIHEI-SENSEI. BY THE THIRD STORY, THE CHARACTERS NO LONGER RESEMBLE THEIR ORIGINAL SELVES, RESULTING IN A COMBINATION OF SMOOTH, BUSTY FEMALES STRAIGHT OUT OF *AIR GEAR* ALONGSIDE HAUNTED DYSTOPIAN CREATURES FROM SOME HORRIFIC REALM. IN FACT, I COULD GO MORE INTO DETAIL ON THE FINER BIZARRITIES OF THE STORIES, BUT THAT WOULD SPOIL THE SURPRISE, SO IF YOU HAVEN'T YET, I HIGHLY RECOMMEND READING THEM TO SEE THE FULL EXTENT OF THEIR MOË EVOLUTION.

IT MAY DEPEND ON THE READER'S OPINION WHETHER OR NOT THAT COUNTS AS "FORWARD EVOLUTION," HOWEVER.

EACH STORY ENDS WITH A VERY CLICHÉD PATTERN OF CIBO'S PANTIES, FULL FRONTAL NUDITY, OR NIPPLES ACCIDENTALLY THRUST INTO KILLY'S VIEW, PROMPTING HER TO PUMMEL HIM. IT'S A CONCEPT I'D LOVE TO SEE IN A MONTHLY FORMAT. BY THE WAY, THE THIRD STORY FEATURED AN EDITORIAL BLURB CALLING IT "WORLD-CENTRIC SF," BUT WHAT EXACTLY MAKES THIS "WORLD-CENTRIC" WILL BE AN ETERNAL MYSTERY. MORE ON THAT TERM LATER.

AT THE START OF THE 21ST CENTURY, JAPAN'S CREATIVE WORLD WAS THRUST INTO A MYSTERIOUS "MOË BOOM." PERHAPS THE START OF THE MOË BOOM CAME WHEN SGT. FROG SUGGESTED THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE GREAT FRENCH PROPHET NOSTRADAMUS'S PREDICTION OF THE GREAT KING OF TERROR WAS NONE OTHER THAN THE ADORABLE TEEN ANGOL MOIS-CHAN

THE LATE 20TH CENTURY WAS OVERFLOWING WITH POSTMODERN NIHILISM, LEADING TO A MIRACULOUS STORM OF DYSTOPIAN FICTION. TECHNOLOGY, THE SYMBOL OF BRIGHT PROGRESS SINCE THE LATE 19TH CENTURY, MADE A TURNABOUT INTO A WEAPON THAT THREATENED HUMAN SOCIETY IN COUNTLESS STORIES THROUGHOUT JAPAN AFTER THE OIL SHOCKS OF THE 1970S. EVEN THE CAPITALIST SUPERPOWER OF AMERICA WAS DARKENED BY THE GRAY FUTURE OF TECHNOLOGY RUN AMOK.

THIS "ANTIFUTURIST" VIEW IS EXEMPLIFIED BY THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF THE AMERICAN MOVIE *BLADE RUNNER* AND THE CONCURRENT TREND OF CYBERPUNK SF, AS WELL AS THE TWIN PILLARS OF POST-WAR JAPANESE MANGA AND ANIME, *AKIRA* AND *NEON GENESIS EVANGELION*.

THE CONCLUSION TO THE "GRAND NARRATIVE" IN REAL LIFE CAME WITH THE FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL AND THE SOVIET UNION, BUT IN THE WORLD OF CREATIVE FICTION, THIS PHENOMENON EVOLVED RAPIDLY THROUGHOUT THE 80S AND 90S.

THE GRAND NARRATIVE OF THE LATTER 20TH CENTURY WAS BELIEF THAT CAPITALISM AND TECHNOLOGY WOULD LEAD HUMANITY TO A HAPPY FUTURE. BUT THE SF PRODUCED AFTER *BLADE RUNNER* WAS THE NEGATIVE OF THIS BELIEF, ITS ANTI-TECHNOLOGICAL IMPRINT, AND THE CONCLUSION OF THE MODERN NIHILISM OF CAPITALIST IDEOLOGY.

BUT WHEN THE 21ST CENTURY CAME, HUMANITY DID NOT PERISH.

IT BROUGHT ABOUT THE RISE OF THE "WORLD-CENTRIC" STORY, OR IN OTHER WORDS, A STORY IN WHICH THE NARRATOR'S OWN STRUGGLE, USUALLY ROMANTIC, IS EXPANDED TO HAVE WORLDWIDE RAMIFICATIONS. OR AS I LIKE TO CALL THEM, "3-METER-RADIUS STORIES," AFTER THE PERSONAL DISTANCE THAT SUPPOSEDLY FOSTERS ROMANCE. IF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THESE STORIES WAS SUMMED UP IN ONE STATEMENT, IT WOULD BE, "I DON'T NEED AN EVANGELION, I DON'T CARE ABOUT HUMANITY, I JUST WANT TO HIT IT OFF WITH CHICKS!"

THESE WORLD-CENTRIC STORIES STILL RETAINED THE TRAPPINGS OF SF ELEMENTS AND LITERARY CYNICISM AS AN "EXCUSE," BUT EVENTUALLY THOSE EXTERNAL IMPURITIES WERE ELIMINATED, LEAVING ONLY THE PURIFIED, BLIND HOPE OF MOÉ, AND THE IDOLIZATION OF THE CHARACTER.

IN THE CYCLE OF THE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION OF STORIES, THIS MOVEMENT WAS AKIN TO THE AUTHOR, EDITOR, AND READER EACH SIMULTANEOUSLY ABANDONING THEIR SELF-AWARENESS AT ONCE.

IT WAS THE ARRIVAL OF THE MOÉ BOOM.

AMID THIS AVALANCHE PHENOMENON, MANY OF THE GREAT DYSTOPIAN ARTISTS OF THE 80S AND 90S BEGAN TO ATTEMPT THEIR OWN MOË WORKS IN THE EARLY 21ST CENTURY, AN ACT OF MASS SUICIDE THAT WOULD MAKE LEMMINGS PROUD.

HIDEYUKI FURUHASHI, A HARD SF LIGHT-NOVELIST WHO PLUMBED THE DEPTHS OF DYSTOPIAN LITERATURE SINCE HIS DEBUT, *BLACK ROD*, AND DID MUCH FOR THE RISE OF THE DENGEKI BUNKO PUBLISHING LINE, UNVEILED THE HEARTWARMING FAMILY COMEDY *THE TATSUMORI'S DINNER TABLE* IN 2000. IT WAS A QUESTIONABLE ATTEMPT AT MOË, GIVEN THAT THE MAIN HEROINE WAS MADE OF METAL AND GALACTIC WARFARE PROMPTLY ERUPTED, BUT FURUHASHI CONTINUED TO EXPERIMENT WITH MOË ALONGSIDE HIS DARKER WORK, UNTIL IN 2006 HE PUBLISHED *ULTRA SISTER WARS SISMAGEDDON*, WHICH WAS ESSENTIALLY IF ALL 108 "STARS OF DESTINY" FROM THE SUIKODEN EPIC WERE DEPICTED AS LITTLE SISTERS.

THE *EVEN A MONKEY CAN DRAW MANGA* DUO OF KENTARO TAKEKUMA AND KOJI AIHARA ATTEMPTED TO TRACE THE RISE OF THE MOË ART-STYLE AND ANALYZE THE BOOM IN THE 21ST CENTURY IN THEIR INIMITABLE STYLE. EVENTUALLY, KENTARO TAKEKUMA, A LIVING LEGEND OF THE DYSTOPIAN STYLE IF EVER THERE WAS ONE, ATTEMPTED *EVEN A MONKEY 2.0*, A HARUHI SUZUMIYA-STYLED MOË CHARACTER PROJECT, WHICH BACKFIRED SPECTACULARLY.

I CAN ALSO VIVIDLY RECALL THE SF GREAT YASUTAKA TSUTSUI CARELESSLY ATTEMPTING A "LIGHT NOVEL" IN THE MAGAZINE FAUST WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM HARUHI'S NOIZI ITO.

EVER SINCE *S-F MAGAZINE* DID A FEATURE ON WORLD-CENTRIC STORIES, THE LITERARY WORLD AND ITS LONG DOWNTURN WERE PUT ON A COLLISION COURSE WITH MOË. EVEN *KOKUBUNGAKU*, THE MOST HARDLINE OF LITERARY MAGAZINES, PUT TOGETHER A MOË SPECIAL ISSUE.

ALL OF WHICH IS TO SAY THAT THE EXTRAORDINARY MOË BOOM IS SOMETHING LIKE A JAPANESE SELF-DEFENSE MECHANISM IN RESPONSE TO THE NIHILISM OF THE UNKNOWN 21ST CENTURY FOLLOWING THE LOSS OF THE GREAT NARRATIVE. THEREFORE, ALL THE MARKETS FOR OUR STORYTELLING MUST BE PAINTED OVER IN THE COLORS OF MOË, FOR WE HAVE LOST ALL OF THE STORIES WE ARE MEANT TO TELL.

...WELL, NOW THAT I'VE WRITTEN A BUNCH OF STUFFY POSTMODERN NONSENSE THAT AMOUNTS TO ANALYSIS AND HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE CREATION OF BACKGROUND OF *BLAME ACADEMY*!, I'LL CONSIDER MY WORK HERE DONE. IF ANY PROBLEM WITH THIS EXISTS, IT SURELY LIES IN THE POOR JUDGMENT OF EDITOR I-UE, WHOSE ONLY MISSION IS TO CONTINUE DEMANDING POOR TSUTOMU NIHEI TO "TAKE CIBO'S CLOTHES OFF!" AND "DRAW CIBO'S NIPPLES AGAIN!"

AFTERNOON IS PRIMARILY KNOWN FOR THE FEEL-GOOD VIBES OF *OH! MY GODDESS*, BUT AS A RESPONSE TO THE GREATNESS OF BELLDANDY, THE REST OF THE MAGAZINE HAS TURNED INTO A DYSTOPIAN FORTRESS, A VERITABLE KOWLOON WALLED CITY OF MOURNING. AS A MATTER OF FACT, I WOULD LOVE TO SEE AN ANTHOLOGY OF ALL THE AFTERNOON MANGA DONE IN A MOË STYLE, NOT JUST *BLAME!*. I WANT TO READ *MOË LOVE-YAN*, WHERE LOVE-YAN HAS EYEBALLS THAT TAKE UP HALF HER FACE, AND AN IDEALIZED KAZUFUSA DRAWN LIKE THE PROTAGONIST OF AN ERO-GAME, FLIRTING IT UP IN A SCHOOL SETTING. HOW ABOUT A *CRAYFISH STUDENT PRESIDENT*, WHERE ALL THE TEEN GIRLS FORM A HAREM CLAMORING FOR CRAYFISH'S ATTENTION? GIVEN THAT THE AUTHOR IS A FAN OF THE KEY GAME DEVELOPER, IT'S EASY TO ENVISION A *BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL ACADEMY*, AND I'D LOVE TO SEE *MOZUYA-SAN* GO EVEN FURTHER DOWN THE ROAD OF MOË CLICHÉ (VOICED BY RIE KUGIMIYA). PERSONALLY, I FIND *MYSTERIOUS GIRLFRIEND X* TO BE THE GREATEST MOË MANGA THERE IS, SO JUST PICTURE MIKOTO IN OUR IMAGINARY MOË AFTERNOON SPECIAL ISSUE, WEARING CAT EARS AND CAT TAIL, ENORMOUS EYES WELLING WITH TEARS AS SHE BATTLES A MYSTERY UFO WITH HER SCISSORS, PROCLAIMING, "THEY'RE NOT PANTIES, SO I'M NOT ASHAMED!"

BUT OF COURSE, THE CENTERPIECE OF MY MAGAZINE WILL BE YES, *SATOSHI KARASUYA-TAN REALLY IS MOË*.

POSTSCRIPT: BOOM-AND-BUST CYCLES TEND TO LAST TEN YEARS. PERHAPS WHEN THE DYSTOPIAN MOURNING STORY COMES BACK INTO VOGUE, THE *BLAME!* SERIES WILL MAKE ITS TRIUMPHANT RETURN.

#### PUBLISHING CREDITS

ZEB-NOID - CHAMPION RED, JULY 2004

BLAME ACADEMY! - AFTERNOON, MAY 2004

BLAME ACADEMY! FIELD TRIP IN NARA - AFTERNOON, OCTOBER 2007

BLAME ACADEMY! BENEATH THE SAKURA TOWER - AFTERNOON, MAY 2008

PACKAGE - NOT PROFESSIONALLY PUBLISHED

NETSPHERE ENGINEER - BESSATSU MORNING #4, 2005

PUMP - NOT PROFESSIONALLY PUBLISHED

BLAME!2 EIGHTH-GENERATION PCELL'S MEGASTRUCTURE ESCAPE CHRONICLE - MORNING BESSATSU MANDALA #2, 2008

GOD OF THE SWAMP - AFTERNOON, OCTOBER 2008

BATTLE LEPIDOPTERAN HAWK MOTHS - YOUNG GANGAN NO.3, 2007



# **BLAME! Academy and So On**

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

A Kodansha Comics Trade Paperback Original

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10

BATTLE LEPIDOPTERAN  
HAWK MOTHS



WE ARE  
HEREBY  
CARRYING  
OUT AN  
ASSAULT  
ON ENEMY  
TERRITORY!!

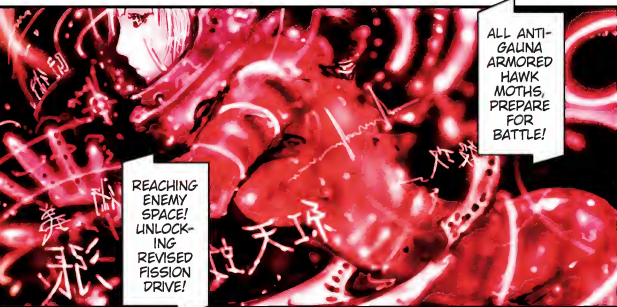






THIS  
SHIP WILL  
REACH  
THE  
THEATER  
OF OP-  
ERATIONS  
MOMEN-  
TARILY.

THIS IS  
VENGEANCE  
FOR THE  
LOSS OF OUR  
PLANET, AND  
A CRUCIAL  
FOOTHOLD IN  
RECLAIMING  
THE EIGHTH  
ALLIED  
STARSPACE.



REACHING  
ENEMY  
SPACE!  
UNLOCK-  
ING  
REVISED  
FISSION  
DRIVE!

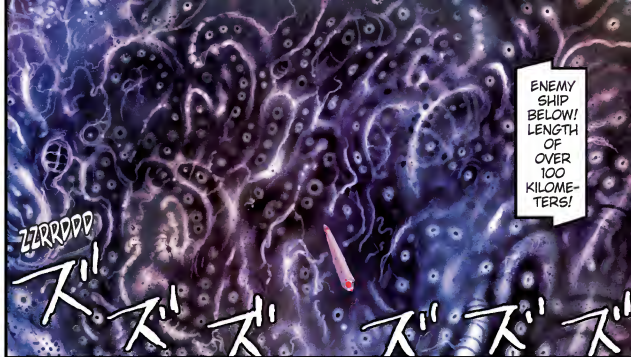
ALL ANTI-  
GALUNA  
ARMORED  
HAWK  
MOTHS,  
PREPARE  
FOR  
BATTLE!



ALL  
UNITS,  
COMMIT  
TO  
CRUSH-  
ING THE  
ENEMY!



SPATIAL  
CORREC-  
TION  
COMPLETE.  
TELEPOR-  
TATION  
SUCCESS-  
FUL.



ENEMY SHIP  
BELOW!  
LENGTH  
OF  
OVER  
100 KILOME-  
TERS!



HIGH-  
CAPACITY  
RE-  
SPONSE!  
THEY'RE  
FIRING!



SORTIE  
HAWK  
MOTHS!



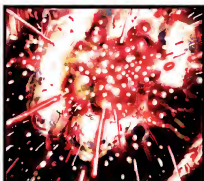
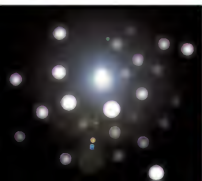
ENEMY  
SHIP  
EMITTING  
GAUNAS!



SHELL  
HIT!  
DAMAGE  
TO 312  
WATCHES!

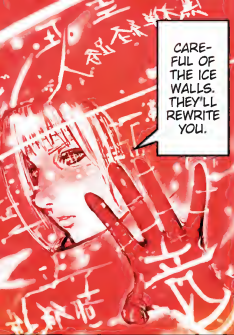
DE-  
PLOY-  
ING  
STAG-  
NA-  
TION  
FIELD!



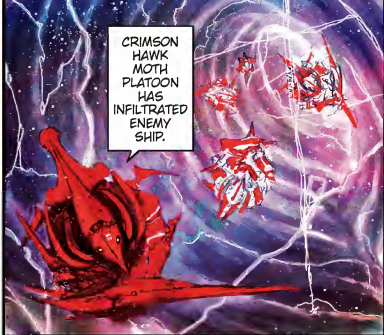








CAREFUL OF THE ICE WALLS. THEY'LL REWRITE YOU.



CRIMSON HAWK MOTH PLATOON HAS INFILTRATED ENEMY SHIP.



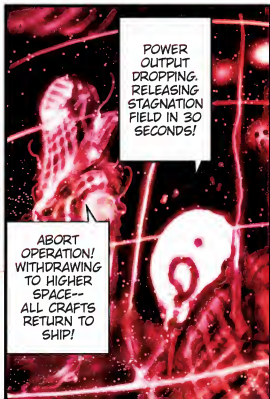
UNIT 4!!!



CRIMSON PLATOON'S NOT GETTING THE SIGNAL. I'LL CALL THEM BACK.



WHERE ARE YOU GOING, UNIT 4?!! RETREAT!

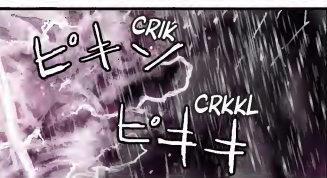
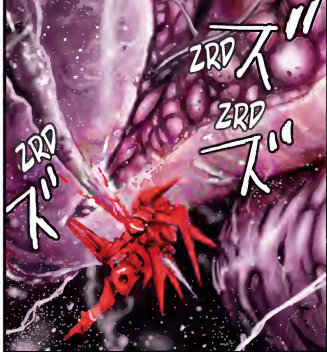


POWER OUTPUT DROPPING. RELEASING STAGNATION FIELD IN 30 SECONDS!

ABORT OPERATION! WITHDRAWING TO HIGHER SPACE-- ALL CRAFTS RETURN TO SHIP!









RETREATING WHEN  
FIELD  
WITH-  
DRAWS.  
WITH-  
DRAWAL  
IN FOUR,  
THREE...

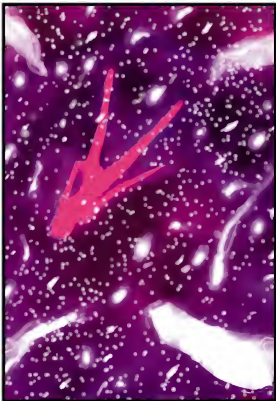


ENEMY CRAFT DECOUPLING! CRIMSON HAWK MOTHS HAVE DESTROYED THE ENEMY CRAFT! WE ARE VICTORIOUS!

GRRRGGGG

ENEMY CRAFT DECOUPLING! CRIMSON HAWK MOTHS HAVE DESTROYED THE ENEMY CRAFT! WE ARE VICTORIOUS!

GRRRRGGGG



10 - BATTLE LEPIDOPTERAN  
HAWK MOTHS - END